

# Lower Spirit Mt. Riverfront Park Site Plan

*Presented to Parks Commission January 10, 2018*

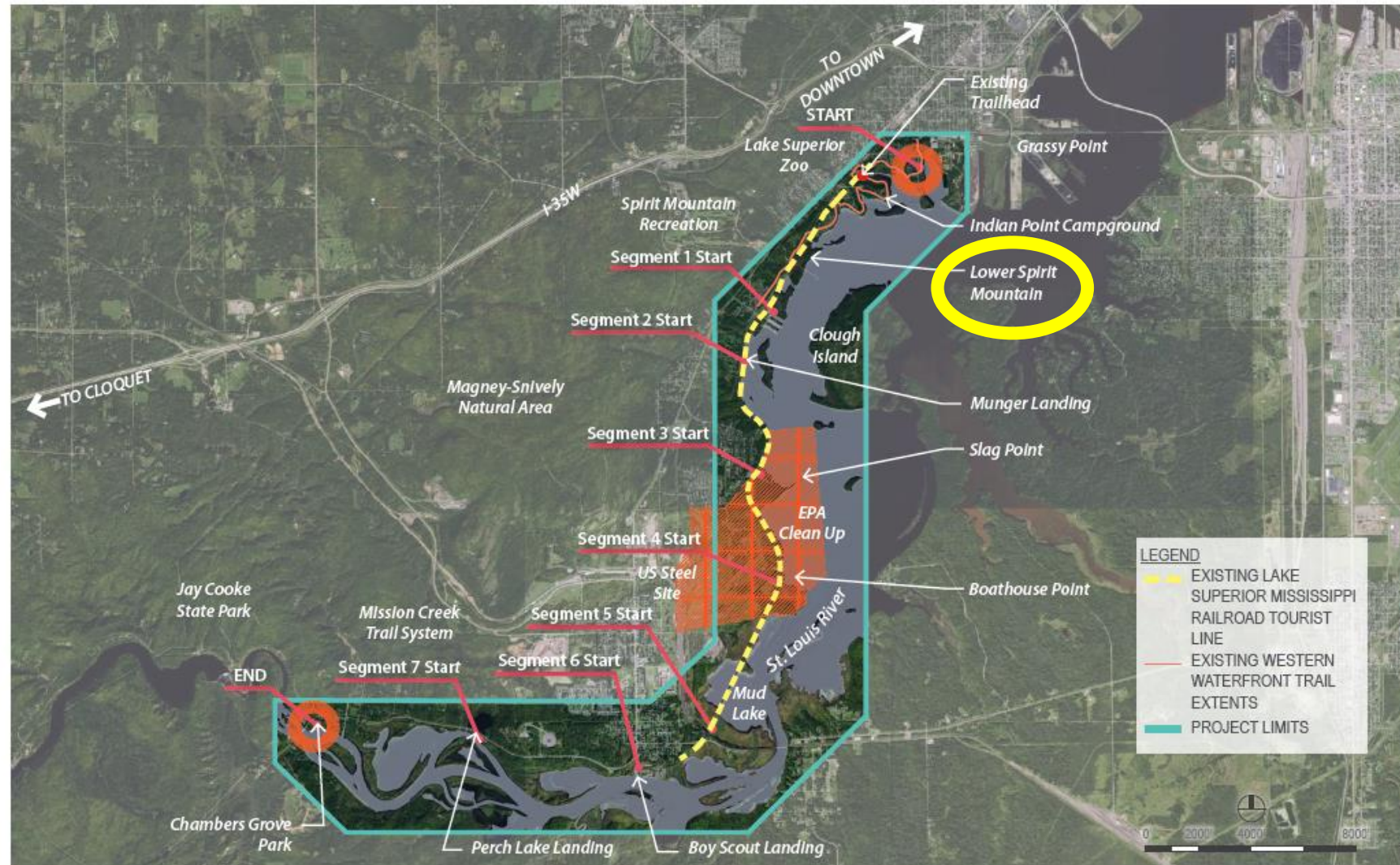


Figure 1.12 Overall Project Limits

# Community Engagement

## **39-member Stakeholder Committee**

The level of community engagement efforts was uniquely diverse and widespread. The City convened a group of stakeholders made up of regulation agencies, business owners, community/neighborhood leaders, elected officials/City staff, and environmental and recreation groups.

A series of five, 3-hour Stakeholder Committee meetings occurred Sept. '16 — Jan. '17:

1. Interpretation and branding to better reflect the heritage of the river corridor
2. Riverfront green spaces – Slag Point, **Lower Spirit Mt. Riverfront Park**
3. St. Louis River access and put-in sites – Munger Landing, Boy Scout Landing, Perch Lake Landing
4. Initial trail extension and rail options
5. Exploring further – River-friendly with Upland Trail, Rail-to-Trail Conversion and full Rail-and Trail

## **Public Meetings**

Two public meetings were held during the planning process. The first public meeting was held on November 15, 2016 and attended by approximately 60 people. At the meeting the City shared the scope of the Plan, and some of the options that were currently being studied by the design team.

The second meeting was held on June 13, 2017. Nearly 100 people attended the meeting where the City shared the recommended trail extension alignment and other riverfront improvements.

## **Online Survey**

A typical practice of the City of Duluth Parks & Rec planning process, the City administered a voluntary online survey. From January 9-26, 2017. It featured 29 questions and had a total of 988 responses. The survey was developed by LHB and administered through the City of Duluth's website.

## **Randomly sampled survey of the 5th District of Duluth**

Telephone interviews were conducted with 440 adult residents of Council District 5, Precincts 28 – 34 in Duluth, Minnesota completed between February 3 and February 5, 2017. The survey was developed and administered by Zenith Research Group





# Mileage between public water access points:

ACCESS POINT	MILEAGE
Grassy Point to Indian Point Campground	1.9 miles
Indian Point Campground to Lower Spirit (new)	1.3 miles
Lower Spirit Riverfront to Spirit Lake Marina	.5 miles
Spirit Lake Marina to Munger Landing	.4 miles
Munger Landing to Slag Point (new)	.9 miles
Slag Point to Boathouse Point (new)	1.4 miles
Boathouse Point to Boy Scout Landing (new)	2.2 miles
Boy Scout Landing to Perch Lake Landing	1.5 miles
Perch Lake Landing to Historical Park	1.7 miles
Historical Park to Chambers Grove	.3 miles

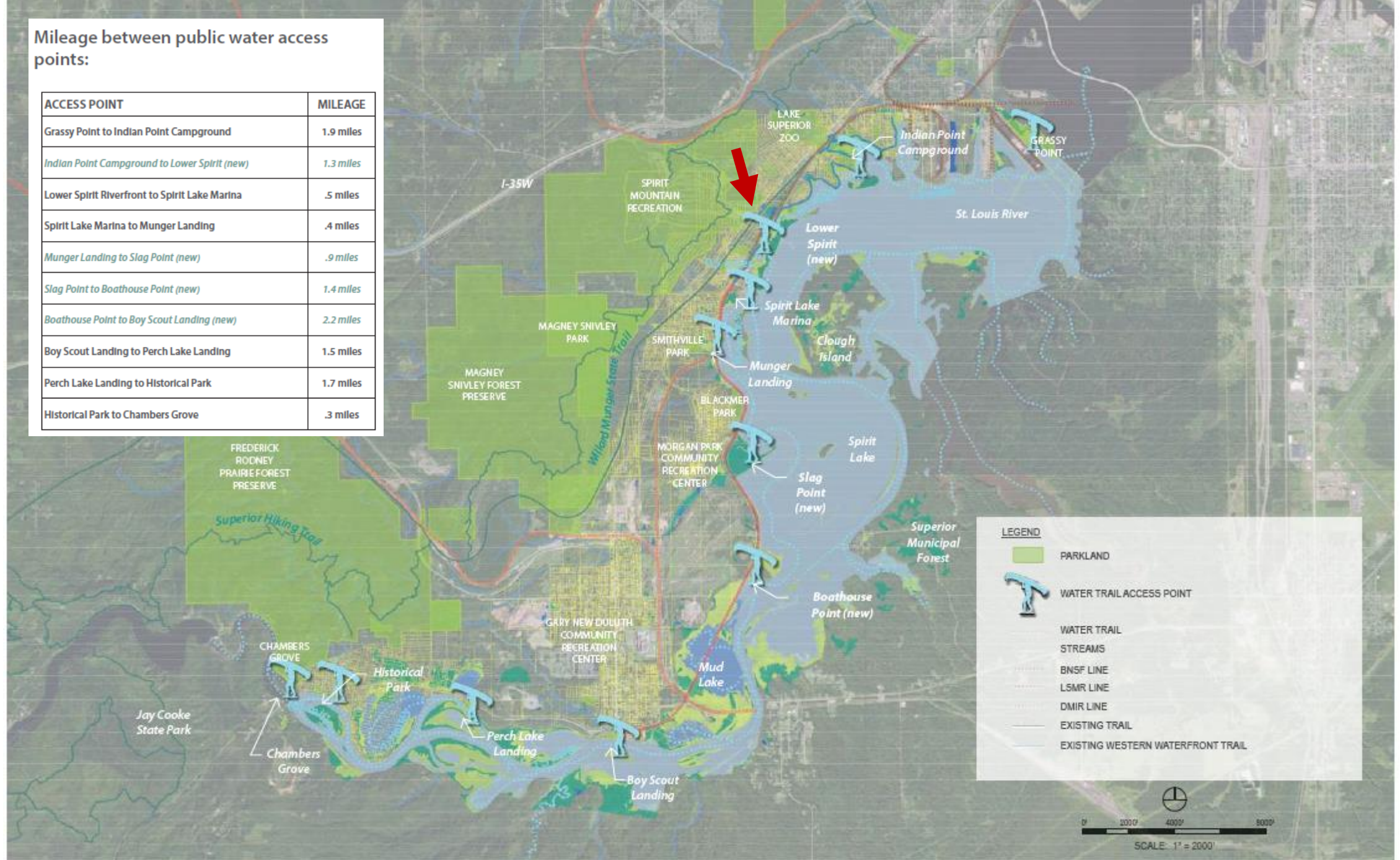


Figure 1.45 Water Trail & Public Access Sites Overview Map





Figure 1.46 Trailheads & Local Trail Access Points Overview Map



Stars below represent the recommended public access and linear park amenities made through the community engagement process that can be met through the Lower Spirit Mountain Riverfront Access

envisioned the trail, linear park, and public access site to look and feel. The design team facilitated several group exercises that addressed site programming and user experience. Recommendations include:

★ **True Multi-Use Trail and Nature Paths.** Meet the needs of a variety of users. Incorporate loops or spurs that provide different experiences, if possible

★ **Points of Interest with Interpretative Signage.** Design a natural winding trail with key scenic overlooks creating upland views, along with river's edge experience

★ **Keep Sites Wild with Natural Feel.** Site furnishings and materials should be made out of natural, local materials.

★ **Parking.** Include additional or small parking lots at trailheads for 5 or more vehicles.

★ **Space for Shuttles/Large Trailers.** Drop off area close to water is ideal, with long-term parking further away if space is limited.

★ **Multi-Use Gathering Space.** Provide outdoor area with shade for family groups, educational programming, etc.

★ **Accessible Non-Motorized Boat Launches.** See page 44 for examples

★ **Toilet Facilities and/or Changing Enclosure.** Include at least two stalls and one for family/group changing. Permanent versus portable to be determined based on site constraints, budget, and long-term maintenance.

Envisioning the Future of the Western Waterfront Trail  
What does the future of the Western Waterfront Trail & Park look like to you?

Group Number

Give your idea a name: Gitchi Gami Ziibi - Heritage Trail

This idea applies to (check all that apply):

- ☒ Community Connection
- ☒ Unique Duluth
- ☒ Economic Development - tourism
- ☒ Environmental Sustainability
- ☒ Safe and Equitable Experience
- ☒ Technical & Financial Feasibility

Obstacles might include (check all that apply):

- ☐ Cost
- ☐ Land Ownership
- ☒ Sensitive Natural Areas
- ☐ Lack of Support
- ☐ Constructability
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please share an idea or opportunity, or suggest places for interpretation along the trail. Draw, describe, or otherwise communicate your idea below...

- Missing from the Duluth/Superior Public Races is the entire history of the story -- the story of Anishinaabe life prior to industry + European Contact.
- Educational signs and art memorials that tell the missing stories are needed and ~~will~~ work towards improving community as well as promoting tourism. I believe the setting of the proposed trail is ideal for this cultural/heritage project/trail.
- If you were a hunter/gatherer, as the Anishinaabe, the St. Louis River Corridor/Estuary was paradise prior to industry. Signs that tell the story of what life was like, as well as representing the destruction that occurred in this geographic location, are important to include (not omit because it is uncomfortable) -- Representing the truth, and stories of what happened here is our legacy moving into the future.

Please comment on where and how often these trail amenities should occur along the corridor:

- Bathrooms \_\_\_\_\_
- Parking \_\_\_\_\_
- Benches \_\_\_\_\_
- Water Access/Fishing Piers \_\_\_\_\_
- Overlooks/Points of Interest Village sites, wildlife sites, wigwag, plankton/diversity, maple sugar bush sites
- Public Art \_\_\_\_\_
- Heritage/Interpretive Landmarks Build awareness of estuary, heritage cultural resources
- Signage/Trail Maps a walking educational trail (with all the stories).
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

WESTERN WATERFRONT TRAIL & PARK MASTER PLAN Duluth, Minnesota  
ST. LOUIS RIVER CORRIDOR

September 22, 2016

Figure 1.31 Visioning Stakeholder Exercise Card

★ **Staging Area for larger groups (outfitting/education).** With implementation of water trail, a flat staging area for outfitting and trek preparation will be critical

- ★ **Temporary Concessions.** To be used for seasonal events, such as fishing opener, race tournaments, festivals. Coordination with utilities and City rental to be further programmed.

★ **Ecological Interpretation.** Tell the story of the area's flora and fauna through visual interpretative panels.

★ **Pollinator/Restoration Plantings.** Where invasive species are problematic, restore with native pollinator plantings for increased biodiversity. Feature in stormwater management best practices as well.



## LOWER SPIRIT PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

### Recommendations

#### Lower Spirit (New Park site)

The Lower Spirit Access Point along the St. Louis River Water Trail will include a new trailhead with directional signage, a drop-off point, and parking for ten cars and seven trailers. There will also be a portable toilet with a changing enclosure near the parking area. Near the drop-off, there will be a staging area for outfitting and group education. On the waterfront, there will be two beach areas; both will include shore fishing and one will include an accessible paddle sport launch. The entire project area will be completed with a landscape restoration planting.

- New trailhead with directional signage
- Drop-off and parking (10) and trailer (7)
- Portable toilet with changing enclosure
- Staging area for outfitters/group education
- Accessible paddle sport launch
- Beach access(2) with shore fishing
- Landscape Restoration Planting
- Rename the area to "Spirit Landing" to better reflect its use



Figure 1.47

- Work with Spirit Mountain Recreation Area and other area developments to identify opportunities for new regionally significant event staging from this location
- Work in partnership with the MN DNR on their on-going monitoring of sediment gathering and efforts to restore bathymetries in the protected bay between Tallus Island and the shoreline.
- Restore and/or preserve adjacent lands that isn't planned for recreational



## Design Concepts | Non-Motorized Watercraft Sites

### Best Practices\*

#### Accessible

- Accessible to all paddlers: slopes should not exceed 8.33%
- Between 9" and 2' from highest expected water level, at least 5' wide, preferably 6'-12'; at least 25' in length
- Handrails or other support structures are helpful
- Located in areas without heavy flow, erosion, exposure to elements, heavy boat traffic or fragile riparian habitats

#### Best-Suited Launch Type

- Choose most suitable type of launch for water body, climate and ecological factors

#### Cost Effective and Durable

- Existing natural sites are preferable, though not always durable and require reinforcement over time

#### Environmentally Friendly

- Low impact design and non-toxic materials protect water quality, vegetation, and riparian habitats



### Launch Types\*

#### Simple Launches

- Natural and existing shorelines, beaches and simple ramps

#### Floating Launches

- Adjust to fluctuating water, are easily removable, provide steady surface

#### Pipe and Pile Launches

- Can span marshes or shallow areas to enable launching in deep enough water

#### Cantilever Launches

- Anchored to the shoreline and extend out over the water, appearing to float - can be partially removable

#### Stairs

- Provide access along steep shorelines, and may be used in areas where water levels change dramatically

#### Concrete Launches: Ramps, Stairs, and Mats

- Can be used as launches themselves or in combination with other launches

#### Concrete Mats

- Most practical for sites that are shared with motorized boats

#### Concrete Strips

- Direct heavy flow or sediment loads away from launch areas

\*National Park Service Report, 'Long Lasting Launches,' 2004



## TRENDS + BEST PRACTICES: ACCESSIBLE BOAT LAUNCH FOR WATER ACCESS

### Design Considerations\*

#### *Provide Access Route*

- Surface, grade, width and cross slope need to be accessible (not to exceed 5% for ADA, not to exceed 8.33% for ABA), and as even and level as possible without gaps or interruptions
- Route clearly marked
- 5' minimum width

#### *Level and stable landing/loading area*

- There should be an area adjacent to the loading area that is stable, at least 60"x60"
- Can be anywhere adjacent to loading area, including in water up to 12" deep

#### *Transfer assistance*

- Transfer step
- Transfer board
- Overhead handles/grab bars
- Non-slip surface textures



\*National Park Service Report, 'Long Lasting Launches,' 2004



# Lower Spirit Mt. Riverfront Park Budget Estimate

OPINION OF PROBABLE COST: CONSTRUCTION-RELATED					
Site Preparation and Mobilization				\$22,500	
Mass Earthwork and Hardscaping				\$256,800	
Park Amenities				67,697	
Planting & Restoration				41,550	
Contingency & Design/Construction Services				<u>87,370</u>	
<b>TOTAL:</b>				<b>\$475,917</b>	